

W2O is thrilled to collaborate with Shaw Institute to bring World Ocean Explorer into living exhibit spaces. We hope this will be the first of 1,000 such in-person experiences of Deep Sea and future theme-based modules, providing maritime museums, aquariums, and educational centers such as the Shaw Institute with great educational ocean resources via our free web-based platform. Explorer is connecting with visitors to downeast Maine this summer, providing a compendium to the vast resources available to visitors to Shaw's visitor center and touch tank in Blue Hill, Maine. Stop by and explore; say hello to our new collaborators; engage with the touch tank; enter the 3D Deep Sea exhibit and explore a whale fall at 1,500 meters.

Shaw Institute Partners with World Ocean Observatory to Offer Students A Virtual Sea Exploration Experience



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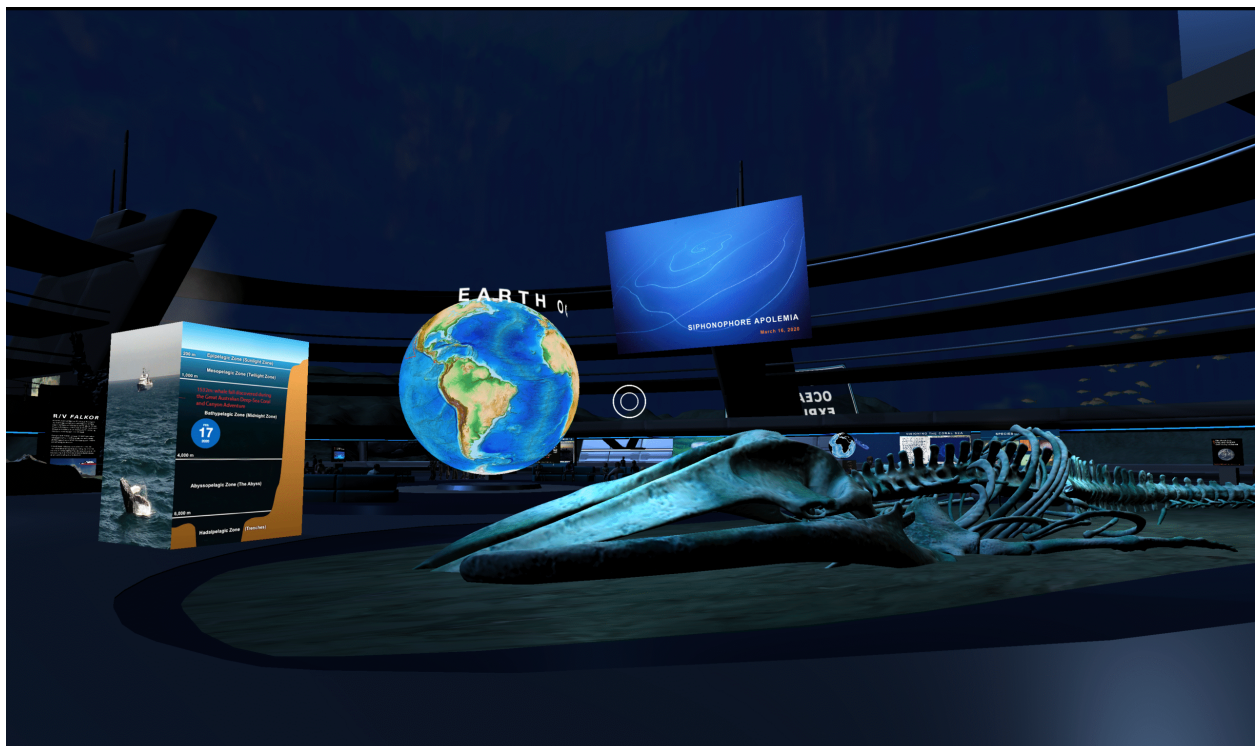
August 5, 2025 – Blue Hill, MAINE, USA

World Ocean Observatory (W2O) and The Shaw Institute are collaborating on an in-person display of W2O's award-winning web-based educational program, World Ocean Explorer, which is now available for visitors of the Institute's Environmental Education Center in downtown Blue Hill, Maine.

Students have the opportunity to experience the first in-person display of the platform's "Deep Sea" module, developed in collaboration with Schmidt Ocean Institute (SOI), using data from their deep-sea discoveries in the waters around Australia.

"I'm thrilled that this educational experience has come to the Shaw Institute," said Nell Herrmann, M.A., M.S., Educational Advisor on World Ocean Explorer. "As a longtime educator at Blue Hill Consolidated School and a former summer naturalist and educator with the Shaw Institute, I'm deeply committed to advancing ocean literacy in our community. I've worked with teachers from around the world to bring this powerful platform into their classrooms – and now I'm incredibly excited to see it implemented right here, in the community I've deliberately chosen as home."

World Ocean Explorer is a transformative virtual immersion, designed as an aquarium setting to deepen the understanding of the world ocean, and to amplify connection for young people worldwide. Beyond its deep-sea tours, the platform also offers users other interactive educational activities. Students of all ages can use a drag-and-drop feature to learn about food webs, understand the process of chemosynthesis, and explore how hydrothermal vents work 4,000 meters below the surface. You can even explore the creatures that feed on a whale fall!



Deep Sea Virtual Space: World Ocean Explorer

“This is a fantastic addition to our expanding mission to provide engaging science-based educational opportunities to our local communities and visitors to the region,” said Dr. Charlie Rolsky, Executive Director and Senior Research Scientist at the Shaw Institute. “It fits in perfectly with our ongoing plans to re-imagine our downtown location into a thriving educational center that can inform and inspire.”

Peter Neill, founder of World Ocean Observatory, added, “As a resident of the Blue Hill peninsula, a W2O partnership with the Shaw Institute has long been a personal dream. Specifically, this installation of Explorer in educational spaces is the first of many, indeed thousands in schools, museums, science centers, and environmental organizations across the US, Caribbean, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The sea connects all things.”

The World Ocean Explorer platform is organized around the principles of Ocean Literacy and in conformance with Federal and State educational standards. It is teacher-vetted, award-winning, endorsed for 2025 by the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 (*aka the Ocean Decade*), and in classrooms around the world.

Students can experience the platform at the Shaw Institute Wednesday through Saturday, from 10am to 4pm. Access is free and is offered on a first-come, first-served basis, with time limited based on demand. To learn more about World Ocean Explorer, please visit worldoceanexplorer.org. To learn more about the Shaw Institute, please visit shawinstitute.org.

About World Ocean Observatory

World Ocean Observatory (W2O) is a leading organization advocating for the health and sustainability of the global ocean, dedicated to providing information and education about the global climate and the health of the ocean. The focus of W2O is the full spectrum of ocean issues: climate, fresh water, food, energy, trade, transportation, public health, finance, governance, security, recreation, and culture. Through an accessible worldwide network of communication, education, partnership, and public connection, W2O is committed to building an expansive global community of ocean literate individuals who will promote and conserve natural and marine resources for the future of all mankind. The sea connects all things. Online at worldoceanobservatory.org

About the Shaw Institute

Shaw Institute is a 501(c)(3) non-profit scientific research organization based in Blue Hill, Maine. Established nearly 35 years ago, the Institute’s mission is to work to discover and expose environmental threats to the health and wellbeing of people, wildlife and the environments we share. Our research on plastics, ocean pollution, marine mammal health, toxic chemicals, and climate change has informed public opinion and influenced public policy, impacting millions of people in Maine, the U.S. and worldwide.